

THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORK SITES BY PROSPECTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS TEACHERS (GAZI UNIVERSITY SAMPLE)

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ABSTRACT

Social network sites are widely used by many people nowadays for various aims. Many researches have been done to analyze the usage of these sites in many different settings. In the literature the number of the studies investigating the university students' usage social network sites is limited. This research was carried out to determine the social network sites usage of physical education and sports students for social and educational purposes. This research was carried out by using descriptive/survey method. The research was done at the School of Physical Education and Sport of Gazi University in Turkey. The participants of the study were comprised of 167 students who are attending the School of Physical Education and Sports of Gazi University. The data were collected by the researcher and analyzed by using several statistical techniques like t-test, Anova, frequency and percentage with SPSS program. according to the results of the study, most of the students who are attending the School of Physical Education and Sports think that social network sites can be used by university students for educational purposes effectively.

Keywords: Social Network Sites, Physical Education, Internet.

INTRODUCTION

The Internet as a technological innovation has changed our lives in unimaginable ways (Forkosh-Baruch & Hershkovitz, 2010). In Web 1.0 users were passive “consumers” of information and characterized as “the public” without having any contribution or active involvement, whereas with the technological advancement in information technology and telecommunications, in Web 2.0. users are allowed to participate (Eteokleous, Ktoridou, Stavrides, & Michaelidis, 2012). Web 2.0 described as web-based technology that makes easier and enhances communication and sharing among others worldwide, turns one-way communication into a two-way communication and process of information (O'Reilly, 2005; Eteokleous, et al., 2012).

In late 1990's social network was born within Web 2.0 having features of blogging and posting and is described by user-generated content, online identity creation, and relational networking(Tariq, Mehboob, Khan, Ullah, 2012; Ghobadi Pour, 2013). It offers online advanced features for users to find and have friends, and some attractive opportunities for communication and sharing information (Forkosh-Baruch & Hershkovitz, 2010; Tiriyakioğlu & Erzurum, 2011) A typical social networking service is based on the maintenance and sharing of users' 'profiles' - online spaces where people can show up themselves to other users through the representation of personal information, interests, photographs, social networks and so on (Selwyn, 2012)

People use social networks for different purposes. Social network sites have been considered as an important tool to share communication and obtain new information as well as make new friendships. Moreover, social network environments introduces facilities for personal statements, creating interest groups, ensuring cooperation, and sharing information.(Aydogan & Akyuz, 2010, Arquero & Romero-Frías, 2013). With the increasing use of social networking websites, the need for information sharing between people and communication is rising and social networks are providing an informal education (Bicen & Uzunboylu, 2013). When all purposes are evaluated together; having fun, contacting friends and sharing information come to the fore. (Akyıldız & Argan, 2012).

Social networks are that one can make contact with someone who is over a great distance within a few seconds(Miah, Omar, Allison-Golding, 2012). Social networks enhance communication skills, participation as well as social commitment, improve peer support, and ensure realization of education based on collaboration strategies (Gülbahar, Kalelioğlu, & Madran, 2010). Social sharing, online and offline communication, ease of use and usefulness, quick access to information and news, and high interaction independent from location are the characteristics features most favored by the users of the social network(Gülbahar, 2013) Enabling new opportunities for the presentation of the self, learning, having of a wide circle of relationships are also the advantages of social networks (Livingstone & Brake, 2010)

On the other hand, there are also disadvantages that social networking increases the likelihood of new risks to the self, these centring on loss of privacy, bullying, harmful contacts and cyber bullying (Livingstone & Brake, 2010; Griffith & Liyengar, 2008). Not being in a secure environment and inadequate privacy issues are the issues that are disliked by users (Gülbahar, 2013) The risk of being used of personal information for unethical reasons is also a concern (Miah et al., 2012).

Although the main focus of student should be education, today's students are emphasizing on such site which can be a complete wastage of time and it has become an addiction for students, teenagers and even adults. All attention and concentration of the students lead them non educational, unethical and inappropriate actions such as useless chatting, time killing by random searching and not doing their jobs. Moreover, social networks provide a virtual life to the students who cannot even speak in front of anyone could feel freedom in their virtual life (Tariq, et al., 2012).

Social Networks in Education

Social networking sites have been used for a variety of educational purposes and help students in educational settings (Akyıldız & Argan, 2012; Arquero & Romero-Frías, 2013) The "social spaces" available to students can enable a more individualized experience for learning in an online environment and can contribute what is taught in a traditional classroom setting (Griffith & Liyengar, 2008).

Most of the students use social networking sites in conducting group projects and assignments and have been found to be very useful in having group work (Zanamwe, et al., 2013) Students are also enhanced by the amount of information disclosed on a teachers' or academics' SNS and the sharing of information amongst groups can have a positive effect on students (Griffith & Liyengar, 2008)

Social networking sites improve technology excellency, enhance social skills and motivates students communicate in new ways with new people (Zanamwe, Rupere, Kufandirimbwa, 2013). Bicen and Uzunboylu (2013) depicts that "it maintains the team-working skills; helps one's personal development; could increase the students' successes; could be helpful for both teachers and students when used as a supportive material in lessons; allows to share information between colleagues" could make students show more interest in lesson; could make learning more enjoyable; helps teachers and students to know each other better via the profile pages; could increase students' motivation by allowing them to communicate with each other; encourages colleagues to learn more; could increase students' will to learn by sharing extra resources about their homework; helps students to find out what goes on in the world through daily news; enables them to share information about scientific studies.

Social Networks and Physical Education

When physical education is considered, it is believed that web tools can be used by PE (Physical Education) teachers to develop their own performances and to foster students' learning processes (Balçıkhanlı, 2012)

Mohnsen (2008) stated that social networks helps, students understand PE-related concepts, introduces students to motor skill techniques, provides simulations and practice experiences, supports self-paced learning and unlimited practice, provides immediate and constructive feedback, and accommodates various learning styles.

Such technologies are likely to help students reconsider the learning process, which ultimately makes them to be aware of their competencies more effectively. At that point, Web 2.0 technologies can be effectively utilized for PE students who receive both theoretical and applied lessons (Balçıkhanlı, 2012).

According to Balçıkhanlı's research (2012) social networks offer great opportunities for students and teacher to interact with each other in a social manner, it allows students to reach the class content and materials posted very easily online; it encourages students to share their assignments and projects with each other; it offers a platform where students and teacher can discuss the relevant topics and give feedback to each other's work; it enables students to focus on the class materials outside the classroom, which is closely linked to independent learning and it increases students' motivation to do more research about the topics in question.

METHOD

This research was carried out by using descriptive/survey method. Data collection tool was developed by Herguner (2011) and it has four dimensions. In the 1st dimension of the instrument, there are questions about the usage purposes of Social Networking sites and in the 2nd dimension there are items about the usage times of internet and Social Networking sites. In the 3rd dimension, determining the information and thoughts of individuals concerning the reliability and intervention of Social Networking sites to private lives of persons were

aimed. In the 4th dimension personal/demographic information was obtained. Validity and reliability of survey revealed that Cronbach Alpha value was found as 0,901. The instrument was applied to 167 students who were attending Gazi University School of Physical Education and Sports. The data were analyzed by using several statistical methods like mean, percentage and frequency.

Participants

The participants of the study were comprised of 167 students who are attending the School of Physical Education and Sports of Gazi University. The participants were from different departments like physical training and sports teaching, sports administration, coaching and recreation in the School of Physical Education and Sports. Data collection was carried out by researcher. 12 questionnaires were eliminated before the analysis of the data because they were incomplete and wrong.

Data Collection and Analysis

All of the procedures concerning the data collection and analysis were carried out by the researcher himself. The questionnaires were distributed to the students and they filled the questionnaires were filled by the students themselves. Identical information were not stated on the questionnaires with the purpose of being answered the questions objectively.

The data collected was analyzed by SPSS program. Bartlett-Ball test was applied to decide on whether there is the same variance for each variable by calculating factor analysis results made on survey variables and results showed that the data obtained was suitable to factor analysis.

KMO test value of the questionnaire was found in the previous application which is revealed by Herguner (2011) as 0, 859, and because this value is bigger than the value of 0, 5 it was seen that the results of factor analysis was acceptable. Cronbach Alpha reliability parameter was controlled to measure the reliability of factor analysis and this value was found 0, 901. 8 dimensions were determined following the factor analysis results of variables in the usage scale of social networking sites (Herguner, 2011).

T-test and Anova test were used to analyze the qualitative data. Results were evaluated in 95% confidence interval and at the p<0, 05 meaningfulness level.

FINDINGS

The findings of the study are as follows.

Table 1: The Distribution of the purpose of the use of SNS

Aims for using SNS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a good time.	9,6	13,8	18,0	45,5	13,2
I guess the results of sports matches.	9,6	10,2	19,2	44,3	16,8
I meet new people.	12,0	16,8	13,2	41,3	16,8
I share my photos and videos with people.	11,4	10,8	13,2	49,1	15,6
I share/discuss developments on the agenda with my friends.	9,0	10,2	12,0	44,3	24,6
I get rid of my loneliness.	22,2	19,2	21,6	28,1	9,0
I can reach my old friends.	10,2	10,8	12,6	41,3	25,1
I can express myself more comfortably.	15,0	14,4	21,6	36,5	12,6
I can have a good time during the day.	11,4	13,2	15,6	42,5	17,4
I can be informed about lot of subjects.	7,2	16,2	21,6	37,7	17,4
I can be informed about technical developments in Physical education and Sports.	6,6	13,2	20,4	39,5	20,4
I enjoy logging on these sites.	9,6	14,4	21,0	43,7	11,4
I can share my feelings and opinions.	9,6	13,2	21,6	43,1	12,6

I think I strengthen my social ties.	12,6	18,6	25,1	34,7	9,0
I feel more peaceful and happier.	12,0	19,2	26,9	30,5	11,4
I can learn what my friends are doing.	7,8	8,4	16,8	51,5	15,6
I keep informed about sports organizations.	9,6	10,2	15,0	45,5	19,8
I am recognized more easily among colleges/students.	9,6	13,2	25,7	38,3	13,2
I can reach funny/interesting photos, videos and notes.	9,0	12,0	15,6	44,3	19,2
I can communicate with prominent people in my field.	12,6	11,4	21,6	39,5	15,0
I can spend my free time.	10,8	10,8	17,4	48,5	12,6
I can be away from the environment that makes me feel bored.	15,6	15,0	19,8	34,1	15,6
I can look at the photos of my friends and see how much they change.	9,6	6,6	13,2	52,1	18,6
I can keep informed about the events on Physical Education and Sports.	9,6	14,4	16,8	44,9	14,4
I improve my culture of Physical Education and Sports.	10,2	14,4	19,2	44,9	11,4
I can share my knowledge and opinions on Physical Education and Sports.	9,0	12,6	22,2	44,3	12,0
I can find solutions to the problems I face in my profession field.	9,0	19,2	18,6	40,1	12,6
I can learn the lives of people prominent in my field.	7,8	17,4	16,8	44,9	13,2
I think I spend my time effectively.	12,6	19,8	25,1	31,7	10,8
I can share my political and social opinions.	11,4	18,6	22,8	35,9	11,4

When we analyze the answers on the distribution of with which aims social networking sites are used, we learn that 52,1 % of the participants agree with the statement “I can look at the photos of my friends and see how much they change.”, 51,5 % agree with the statement “I can learn what my friends are doing”, 49,1 % agree with the statement “I share my photos and videos with people”, and 48,5 % agree with the statement “I can spend my free time”. When we analyze the items which students agree less, we can see that, 28,1 % of the participants agree with the statement “I get rid of my loneliness”, 30,5 % agree with the statement “I feel more peaceful and happier”, and 31,7 % agree with the statement “I think I spend my time effectively”. It can be understood from the table that the students in Physical Training and Sports Teaching are frequent users of Social Network Sites. The fact that the statement which is preferred at the highest level is related with friends shows the aim of social networking sites by university students is to realize communication and share among themselves.

Table 2: Gender distribution of the participants

	N	%
Male	59	35,3
Female	108	64,7
Total	167	100

It was determined that 35,3 % of the participants consist of males, and 64,7 % consist of females.

Table 3: The distribution of the place where the participants have lived during most of their lives

Place where they have lived during most of their lives	N	%
Big Cities	125	74,9
City	24	14,4
Town	15	9,0
Small Town	2	1,2
Village	1	,6
Total	167	100

It was determined that 74,9 % of the participants have lived in cities, 14,4 % have lived in cities, 9,0 % have lived in towns, 0,6 % have lived in metropolitans. It can be seen that most of the participants have lived in big

cities. Nowadays, parents are trying to create an environment in which their children can enjoy good conditions, and so they prefer big cities instead of small places.

Table 4: The distribution of with whom the participants live

With whom they live	N	%
Alone	7	4,2
With a Friend	10	6,0
With Family	134	80,2
In a Dormitory	12	7,2
Other	4	2,4
Total	167	100,0

It was determined that 4,2 % of students live alone, 6,0 % of the participants live with their friends, 80,2 % live with their families and 7,2 % live in a dormitory. It is understood that the first choice of university students is to live with their families.

Table 5: The results of ANOVA test on the relationship between the purpose of use of SNS and the place where they have lived

	N	Mean	Sd.	F	P
Big Cities	125	3,16	1,00	0,93	0,448
	24	2,92	0,88		
	15	3,20	0,86		
	2	4,00	0,00		
	1	4,00	.		

There is no statistically meaningful relationship between the aim of using social networking sites and the place where they have lived. In todays world, there is an internet access everywhere, there are no place and time boundaries for logging into these social networking sites.

Table 6. The results of ANOVA test on the relationship between the purpose of use of SNS and with whom they

	N	Mean	Sd.	F	P
Alone	7	3,6	1,0	0,5	0,739
	10	3,3	1,1		
	134	3,1	1,0		
	12	3,0	1,2		
	4	3,0	0,8		

There is no statistically meaningful relationship between the aim of using social networking sites and with whom they live. And yet, in average, those who live with their friends use social networking sites more. It can be said that they encourage each other to talk to their mutual friends, to search the things they wonder, or to communicate with their families.

Table 7: The frequency of the information and the thoughts of participants about the intervention of SNS to private lives of persons

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Their thoughts about whether social network sites intervene in private lives of persons					
I think social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc.) are indispensable communication sources of our day.	18,0	14,4	21,0	30,5	16,2
I think social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc.) are secure sites.	15,6	21,0	34,7	23,4	5,4
I think social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc.) have more negative effects than positive effects.	16,2	13,8	29,9	26,9	13,2
I think social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc.) cause intervention of private life of persons.	12,0	10,2	23,4	39,5	15,0
I think social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc.) keep my personal information, photos, and videos safely.	16,2	18,6	29,9	25,7	9,6
I see no harm to upload photos and videos to social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.).	13,2	14,4	29,3	33,5	9,6
I think social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc.) take necessary precautions to protect my photos and videos.	18,0	19,8	32,9	22,2	7,2
I am concerned that unwanted persons and/or the people I don't know can reach my information, photos and displays through social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.).	10,8	15,6	31,1	34,1	7,8

When the answers of participants about the intervention of Social Networking sites to private life of persons given to the scale concerning information and thoughts of persons are analyzed, participants agreed with the hypothesis that “I think Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) are indispensable source of communication of our day” at the rate of 30,5 %.

It is seen that 23,4% agrees with the hypothesis that “I think Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc.) are secure sites”. This result is an indication that the young find social networking sites highly unsecure. 26.9% agreed with the hypothesis that “I think Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) have more negative effects than positive effects” in total. It is seen that 29.9% are undecided. According to this result, although students are users, they are aware of the negative sides of social networking sites.

It is seen that 39,5% agrees with the hypothesis that “I think Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) causes intervention of private life of persons” in total. This result indicates that the young perceive the Social networking sites as the intervention factor to their private life. On the other hand, 18,6% doesn’t agree with the hypothesis that “I think Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) keep my personal information, photos and videos safely” in total. It is seen that they confirm their opinions about the unreliability of social networking sites with this result.

33,5% agrees with the hypothesis that “I see no harm to upload photos and videos to Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc.)” in total. It is seen that 19,8% doesn’t agree with the hypothesis that “I think Social Network (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) take necessary precaution to protect my photos and videos”. It shows that social networking sites are perceived as unsecure by the participants. It is stated that 34,1 % agrees with the hypothesis that “I am concerned that persons unwanted and/or I don’t know can reach my information, photos and displays through Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.)” in total.

Table 8: T test results of the relationship between the information and thoughts of individuals and gender in terms of the intervention of SNS to private lives of individuals

	N	Mean	SS	t	P
Male	59	3,5	1,2		
Female	108	3,3	1,2	1,094	0,276

A statistically significant relation was found between information and thoughts of individuals and gender concerning the intervention of social networking sites to private lives of individuals.

Table 9: The distribution of the intended uses of the Internet by participants

Intended uses of the Internet	N	%
Chat	13,0	7,8
Playing Games	19,0	11,4
Research and information	76,0	45,5
Entering SNS(Facebook, Msn,etc)	48,0	28,7
Other	10,0	6,0
Total	167	100

It is seen that intended use of internet of 45.5% of participants is to make research, 28,7 % of participants is to enter SNS, and 11,4 % is for playing games.

Table 10: The frequency of daily Internet use of participants

Frequency of daily internet use	N	%
Less than an hour	37	22,2
1-2 Hours	51	30,5
3-4 Hours	46	27,5
More than 4 Hours	32	19,2
Total	167	100,0

It is determined that 30,5% of participants use internet for 1-2 hours daily, 27,5% uses internet for 3-4 hours daily, 22,2% uses internet for less than an hour daily. It is seen that the majority of participants uses internet for 1-2 hour daily.

Table 11. The distribution of the relationship between the time spent for SNS by participants and time spent on the Internet

Time Spent to SNS	Time Spent on The Internet							Total		
	Less Than an Hour		2-3 Hours		3-4 Hours		More Than 4 Hours			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	
Less Than an Hour	27	7,5	7	1,94	1	2,77	1	2,77	36	100
1-2 Hours	31	6,08	19	3,73	1	1,96	0	0	51	100
3-4 Hours	11	2,39	12	2,61	20	43,48	3	6,52	46	100
More Than 4 Hours	10	3,03	13	3,94	7	21,21	3	9,09	33	100
Total	79	4,76	51	3,07	29	17,47	7	4,22	166	100

It is determined that there is a statistically meaningful relation between the time spent to social Networks by participants and time spent in internet ($p<0,001$).

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In modern world, the social network sites are used by most people very frequently. Especially young people are using the social network sites very frequently and actively in their social life. On the other hand, with the spread of social network sites usage into the lives of people, educational usage of these sites are come into discussion very much. Many researches have been done to analyze the usage of these sites in primary and secondary schools. But the need for studying and investigating the university students' usage social network sites is apparent.

Concerning these needs, this research was carried out to determine the social network sites usage of physical education and sports students for social and educational purposes. The research was done at the School of Physical Education and Sport of Gazi University in Turkey. The data were collected by the researcher and analyzed by using several statistical techniques with SPSS program.

The gender of the participants was not found to effect the reason of using social network sites. In addition, any significant relationship wasn't found between the usage reasons of social network sites and the variables of the place where they live and with whom they live. The results of the study also revealed that the university students have almost similar habits concerning the usage of social network sites regardless of the gender, place and income.

Most of the university students in the School of Physical Education and Sports are not confident about the reliability of the social network sites and they do not trust them. Most of them think that they can cause intervention to their private life, and their negative effects are more than positive effects. On the other hand, most of them think that these sites can be used for educational purposes if they are used truly and effectively.

In addition, most of the students who are attending the School of Physical Education and Sports think that social network sites can be used by physical education and sports students for educational purposes effectively. These sites can provide a good communication basis for achieving their educational aims.

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